

**REMARKS**

**I. The Art Rejections**

Claims 1-3, 7/2, 7/3, 10-11, 14/11, and 17/1/2-20/1/2 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Anderson et al. (US 2002/0015952).

Claims 2, 5/2, and 612 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Frazier et al. (WO 00/16833).

Claims 2-5, 7, 11, and 13/11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as allegedly being obvious over Durst et al. (DE4308697).

Claim 6/2 and 6/3, is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Anderson as applied to claims 1-3, 7, 10-11, and 14 above, and further in view of Frazier et al. (WO 00/16833).

Claims 8-9, 15-16, 17/8, 18/8, 19/8 and 20/8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Anderson as applied to claims 1-3, 7, 10-11, and 14 above, and further in view of Wolk (US 6,148,508).

Claim 12 and 13/12, are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Anderson et al. (US2002/001 5952) as applied to claims 1-5, 7, 11, and 13 above, and further in view of Matson et al. (US 5,429,807).

Claims 12 and 14/12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Anderson et al. (US2002/001 5952) as applied to claims 1-3, 7, 10-11, and 14 above, and further in view of Matson et al. (US 5,429,807).

Applicants respectfully submit that the present invention is not anticipated by or obvious over the disclosures of the cited art and request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw this rejection in view of the following remarks.

In the Response to Arguments section the Examiner states that Applicants may be arguing that that the filaments of the claimed invention have a certain flexibility but that such a flexibility limitation is not found in the claims. Applicants have amended the independent claims to recite that the hollow filament is flexible and not merely that it can become flexible. The term "arbitrary shape" has also been deleted.

Regarding claim 20, the Examiner states that cylindrical hollow filaments are considered to be "curved". However, Applicants' specification discusses curved shapes in relation to Figure 13 (Applicants' specification, page 34, lines 17-18). It is respectfully submitted that Applicants' curved hollow fibers are curved along their length. Such language clearly not mean a cross sectional round shape. Applicants may be their own lexicographer and the meaning of the claim language of claim 20 is clear and definite.

The inherent ability to be curved is not the same as being curved, and a curved hollow filament would not have been obvious based on inherent ability absent some reason in the cited art to make a curved hollow filament.

For the above reasons, it is respectfully submitted that the subject matter of claims 1-20 is neither taught by nor made obvious from the disclosures of the cited art, either alone or in combination, and it is requested that the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §§102 and 103 be reconsidered and withdrawn.

**II. Conclusion**

In view of the above, Applicants respectfully submit that their claimed invention is allowable and ask that the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §§102 and 103 be reconsidered and withdrawn. Applicants respectfully submit that this case is in condition for allowance and allowance is respectfully solicited.

If any points remain at issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the local exchange number listed below.

If this paper is not timely filed, Applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. The fees for such an extension or any other fees that may be due with respect to this paper may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-2866.

Respectfully submitted,  
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